NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER 1-0005 JANUARY 21, 1976
WAYNE COREY/KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIA: COMMUNIST INSURGENCY SITUATIONER

ANNCR:

MORE THAN FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS IN MALAYSIA WERE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVELY SUPRESSED, THEY ARE STILL ACTIVE IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. WITH A BACKGROUND REPORT, HERE IS WAYNE COREY IN KUALA LUMPUR.

VOICE:

MALAYSIA'S COMMUNISTS SERVED NOTICE THAT THEY WERE STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE AFTER THE LATE PRIME MINISTER TUN ABDUL RAZAK VISITED PEKING IN NINETEEN-SEVENTY-FOUR TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA. IN A SERIES OF URBAN TERRORIST ATTACKS, THEY BLEW UP THE MONUMENT IN KUALA LUMPUR TO THOSE WHO DIED WHILE FIGHTING THE COMMUNIST INSURRECTIONISTS DURING THE EMERGENCY FROM NINETEEN FORTY-EIGHT UNTIL NINETEEN-SIXTY.

DESPITE THESE VERY VISIBLE ATTACKS, OBSERVERS HERE SAY THE COMMUNISTS DO NOT POSE A SERIOUS THREAT. THEY SAY THE COMMUNISTS ARE NOT IN THE OPEN WARFARE PHASE OF THEIR INSURGENCY BUT ARE INSTEAD TRYING TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS, SECURE REAR BASE AREAS AND INTIMIDATE PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS. THE GENERAL FEELING IS THAT THE URBAN COMMUNIST ATTACKS INCLUDING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MONUMENT IN KUALA LUMPUR WERE INTENDED TO SHOW PEKING THAT THE COMMUNIST WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY ANY GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND CHINA.

ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNIST ARE ACTIVE IN SOME WAY IN ABOUT SEVEN OF MALAYSIA'S THIRTEEN STATES, THEIR OPERATIONS ARE

HINDERED BY FACTIONAL DIVISION. THERE ARE THREE FACTIONS. THE MOST IMPORTANT IS THE SO-CALLED MALAYSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE FACTION WHICH CONSISTS OF ABOUT TWENTY-FOUR HUNDRED ARMED TERRORISTS WHO OWE THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO CHIN PENG. CHIN PENG IS THE PARTY'S SECRETARY GENERAL WHO RECEIVED THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE FOR HIS WORK IN THE ANTI-JAPANESE RESISTANCE DURING WORLD WAR TWO. IN THE PAST, HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO NEGOTIATE FOR SOME COMMUNIST PRESENCE IN KUALA LUMPUR, BUT THESE TALKS WERE FRUITLESS.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FACTION OF THE MALAYSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY TENDS TO CONCENTRATE ITS ACTIVITIES IN RURAL AREAS, WHILE THE SECOND FACTION, THE MARXIST-LENNINIST SPLINTER GROUP WITH A FEW HUNDRED ACTIVE SUPPORTERS, FAVORS URBAN TERRORISM. THIS GROUP IS THOUGHT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN KUALA LUMPUR.

THE THIRD COMMUNIST FACTION IS THE SO-CALLED R-F, THE REVOLUTIONARY FACTION. THIS FACTION AND THE MARXIST-LENNINIST BRANCH OPERATE EXTENSIVELY IN THE NORTHERN STATES OF PERAK AND KELANTAN AND EVEN INSIDE THAILAND. AT LEAST ONE COMMUNIST REGIMENT IS REPORTED TO HAVE ITS HEADQUARTERS IN BETONG DISTRIC IN SOUTHERN THAILAND, AN AREA IN WHICH THAI FORCES HAVE VERY LIMITED CONTROL.

ANALYSTS SAY THE COMMUNISTS ARE PRETTY MUCH SELF-SUFFICIENT IN ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND CAN STEAL OR BUY FROM VARIOUS SOURCES WHAT THEY NEED. BUT IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ARMS IN ANY LARGE NUMBER HAVE NOT BEEN REACHING THE COMMUNISTS FROM INDOCHINA. AT THE SAME TIME, CHINA'S SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENCY IN MALAYSIA IS DESCRIBED AS STRICTLY VERBAL, PARTLY IN THE FORM OF THE CLANDENSTINE VOICE OF

THE MALAYAN REVOLUTION WHICH BROADCASTS FROM NEAR HANKAL.

THE INSURGENTS IN MALAYSIA ARE COMING UNDER INCREASINGLY STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES. IN ADDITION, THE NEW PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSSEIN ONN, IS EXPECTED TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE ARMED FORCES, WHICH NOW NUMBER ABOUT SEVENTY THOUSAND MEN.

ONE DRASTIC STEP UNDERTAKEN BY TUN RAZAK LAST YEAR WAS THE INTRODUCTION OF CONTROVERSIAL MEASURES WHICH PROVIDED FOR TERRORISTS CRIMES TO BE TRIED IN SPECIAL COURTS AND FOR TERRORISTS TO HAVE TO PROVE THEIR INNOCENCE. WITH A GOVERNMENT NOT HESITATING TO ADOPT METHODS IT CONSIDERS NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH THE INSURGENTS, THE FEELING HERE IS THAT AN EVENTUAL COMMUNIST VICTORY IN MALAYSIA IS NOT AT ALL A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.

JS/PY